

# In Other Words...

A RESEARCH SERVICE FOR CHRISTIAN COMMUNICATORS

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**COMPASSION:** Jimmy Mellado, the president & CEO of Compassion International, often states, “When we encounter suffering, we can either lean in or look away. When love wins the day, looking away is never an option because love always leans in.” *Compassion.com*, 6/13/2025

**DATING:** U.S. daters spend over \$117 billion per year looking for love. *The Week*, 3/17/23, p.36

**DECISIONS:** Dr. Gregory Moffatt has stated, “If you wait until you have all the facts before you make a decision, it isn’t a decision. It is a conclusion.” Colin Powell (1937-2021) advocated for the “40-70 Rule” noting that strong leaders make decisions within a window of 40%-70% of the information. We’d all like to be 100% sure but that’s called hindsight. *Google AI*, 1/21/26

**DISPOSITION:** In an article about the top 10 reasons new businesses fail, probably the most telling reason was the one in first place. You’d expect the list to include issues like growing too quickly (9), lack of experience (6), problems with capital (5), lack of market (4), and unforeseen crises (3), but the #1 reason for new business failure might surprise most of us: Being too stubborn. More than anything, the unwillingness to heed counsel or make corrections jeopardizes success. It’s true about business, relationships and almost everything. *Wall Street Journal*, 12/8/25, p.A11

**FLEXIBILITY:** Gary He traveled to more than 50 countries over three years to study the largest restaurant chain in the world, McDonald’s. His research resulted in a 420-page book released in 2025, and the most significant finding is flexibility. The hamburger franchise has 42,000 stores on 6 continents, in over 100 countries, and serves 65 million customers a day...but they don’t all have the same menu. There’s no Big Mac in India where beef is sacred. Potato-croquette burgers are served instead. The Malaysian Golden Arches serve rice, Singapore gets McSpicy chicken, marinated chicken bones are on the China menu, it’s McSpaghetti in the Philippines, beer is one of their beverages in the Czech Republic, the French can order a McBaguette, and Sweden has a ski-through location. Serving cheap hamburgers on Route 66 morphed through the years to accommodate local taste. That’s why the Filet-O-Fish was introduced in Cincinnati, Ohio because they were losing Catholic customers on Fridays in 1962. No dietician is ever going to recommend McDonald’s menu, but take note of Mickey D’s flexibility. *Wall Street Journal*, 4/5/25, p.R6

**INFLUENCE:** As part of their May 24, 2024 podcast, Radiolab did a unique interactive experiment with their studio audience. The day’s topic involved music used by astronauts going to the moon so it was titled *Mixtapes To The Moon*. To help participants better understand the power of soundtracks, each one in the audience was given headphones to wear while observing a 60-second video clip of a very ordinary day at a shopping mall back in the 1970s. It began at an indoor water fountain and then panned slowly to shoppers going up the escalator. People were asked to describe how they felt watching the mundane video and the responses varied. One noted it felt like a normal day at the mall while another said they felt alienated and disconnected. Someone said it felt bubbly and smooth, but someone else said it felt scary, like something terrible was going to happen – maybe a plane crash or a bomb. Confusion followed as people looked around for clarity on why there were such differing experiences. The host explained that even though they were all viewing the same scene, three different soundtracks were being fed through the headphones. Some heard ambient mall noise, others heard bubbly music and some heard this

menacing drone sound. What we hear influences our disposition so look for opportunities to be an uplifting ‘soundtrack’ to those around you. *Radiolab.org, Mixtapes To The Moon, 5/24/2024*

**LOVE:** Psychiatrist Karl Menninger (1893-1990) wrote, “Love cures people, both the ones who give it and the ones who receive it.” *The Best Advice I Ever Heard, Amy Newmark, 2018, p.162*

**LOVE:** A 2025 national survey revealed that 63% of Americans would marry for love even if it meant lifelong financial struggles. The remaining 37% said they’d pick money over love if they had to choose. True love often competes against the love for money. *USA Today, 9/3/25, p.A1*

**LOVE:** Just before John Wooden (1910-2010) turned 90, Rick Reilly wrote an article about the legendary basketball coach for *Sports Illustrated*. In that piece he noted Wooden’s monthly ritual of writing a note to his wife Nellie. But the twist was, she had died 15 years earlier after 53 years of marriage. Wooden penned a love letter to her on the 21st of each month letting her know how much he missed her since her passing on March 21, 1985. He’d then place it in the large stack of previous letters neatly held together with a yellow ribbon on her pillow. It was his way of communicating his undying love for her, and as he would say, “Death is my only chance to be with her again.” It’d be nice to see his old-school-love go retro. *Preaching Magazine, 3/10/25*

**PEACE:** January 8, 2026 marked the 70th year since five missionaries were murdered in an Ecuador jungle – Jim Elliot, Peter Fleming, Ed McCully, Nate Saint, Roger Youderian. That was the first of two times Elisabeth Elliot (1926-2015) would become a widow. In the adversity of her life, she leaned upon the truth of a poem written by Amy Carmichael (1867-1951). This missionary to India was bedridden for the last 20 years of her life and wrote these words during that time, “In acceptance lieth peace.” Those words guide us to embrace the reality that God has allowed. It’s not passive resignation but active trust in the steadfast love of God. *Mature Living, Feb 2026, p.49*

**RESPONSIBILITY:** The Indiana Hoosiers capped off their undefeated football season with a national championship on January 19, 2026 – the first in their football program’s 139-year history. It was Curt Cignetti’s second year as head coach and he came with a philosophy of responsibility. Throughout their facilities and woven into their DNA are three letters: DYJ. It stands for Do Your Job. They believed if everyone did his job to the best of his ability, good outcomes would follow. Taking our responsibilities seriously fosters the likelihood of success. *USA Today, 1/12/2026, p.C1*

## EVERYDAY HUMOR

**DATING:** A little girl asked her babysitter if she had a boyfriend. Madi replied, “Not anymore. Boyfriends are a waste of time.” The young girl then turned to her brother and said, “You’re going to be a waste of time.” *Reader’s Digest, December 2020, p.32*

**COMMITMENT:** One humorist speculated on what you might get if lawyers wrote those little Valentine’s heart candies: U & ME 4EVER (TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY). *AARP, January/February 2025, p.46*

**HELP:** President Ronald Reagan liked to repeat a line he used at a Presidential News Conference on August 12, 1986: “The nine most terrifying words in the English language are, ‘I’m from the government, and I’m here to help.’” “Help” isn’t always helpful. *Google AI, 1/19/26*

**LOVE:** *Peanuts* creator Charles Schulz (1922-2000) stated, “All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn’t hurt.” Wise words! *Reader’s Digest, September 2020, p.14*

**MARRIAGE:** For our Valentine’s dinner date, my wife asked if we were going to a place where we pay before or after we eat. A useful marital barometer. *Beaumont Enterprise, 1/18/26, p.Z4*

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